WHAT TO DO ABOUT MARKET STREET

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WHAT TO DO ABOUT MARKET STREET

LIVINGSTON AND BLAYNEY, City and Regional Planners • In association with Lawrence Halprin and Associates, Landscape Architects • Rockrise and Watson, Architects • Larry Smith and Co., Real Estate Consultants

CALIFORNIANA

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San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association: John E. Hirten, Executive Director

Memorandum

December 11, 1962

SUBJECT: Action on Market Street

TO: Market Street Property Owners and Businessmen

Honorable Mayor and Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco

FROM: Market Street Development Project Steering Committee

On June 6, 1962, several leading businessmen and property owners on Market Street met with officers of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association to discuss the future of Market Street - San Francisco's main thoroughfare. The meeting ended with agreement on three objectives: to transform Market Street into one of the world's most attractive boulevards; to rid Market Street of its shabby atmosphere; and to put new life into Market Street as a center of Bay Area business, shopping, and entertainment. It was further agreed that a program or plan of action was needed.

The Market Street representatives who were present organized as a steering committee and temporarily affiliated with SPUR for administrative and technical assistance. Recognizing the complexity of the problems of Market Street, the committee retained a team of consultants - urban planners, designers, and real estate experts. Their assignment was to survey and analyze Market Street, define its problems, and suggest an approach to its revitalization. The report that follows this memorandum is the result of these studies.

We propose a plan of action that will carry out the recommendations of the report. It is not a rigid program. It is flexible and undoubtedly will be modified as progress is made. But its objectives are clear, and the program will furnish the necessary guide lines for a Market Street development project to begin at once.

The Problem

Market Street is a paradox. It is San Francisco's most famous street. It is wide, busy, and important. But it is also congested, dirty, and unattractive. In places Market Street is bright and cheerful; in other places it is ugly and depressing. Market Street is San Francisco's main artery; a wide river of traffic flows from Twin Peaks to the Ferry Building. But Market Street also is a barrier between north and south in downtown San Francisco. Market Street lies at the heart of San Francisco's office, retail, and cultural life, and at the doorstep of the City government. But Market Street also houses penny arcades, risque movies, and cheap merchandising outlets.

Something must be done about Market Street, but it must be something that strikes at the basic issues. No single element alone is responsible for Market Street's condition. No simple solution will solve its problems. The plan of action must be comprehensive. But to devise such a plan, we first must know Market Street and understand its peculiarities and troubles.

The Justification

The land and buildings on Market Street east of Van Ness Avenue represent more than 6 per cent of the City's total assessed property valuation. Here is almost 10 per cent of the City's assessed land value. Market Street serves a number of vital functions and is virtually five streets in one. It is a complex of large corporate headquarters, of banks, of offices, of major stores, and of theaters. In addition, it is the focus of the City's public transportation system. Market Street also is a gateway to the Bay, to Twin Peaks, to the financial district, to the downtown shopping area, and to the Civic Center. It is all these and more.

But today Market Street is in trouble. Property values elsewhere in the city and in the Bay Area have increased phenomenally in recent years, but property values on Market Street, the virtual center of the metropolitan region, have not been keeping pace. Yet because of its location and because of its traditional role, taxes on Market Street appear to be disproportionately high, reflecting not its current position, but its past importance.

The Treatment

A broad range of items needs immediate attention to achieve the committee's objectives.

1. Land use and transportation:
    - More efficient use of Market Street properties.
    - Increased business activity.
    - More pleasant conditions for pedestrians.
    - Better public transportation and less traffic congestion.
    - More off-street parking.
2. Environment:
    - Handsome buildings and store fronts.
    - Better designed, more effective signs, both public and private.
    - More attractively designed street furniture, such as benches, newsstands, and litter cans.
    - Beautiful landscaping, tree planting, fountains, and sculpture.
    - Squares, plazas, and arcades where people can gather and enjoy themselves.
3. Public action:
    - To regulate parking.

- To facilitate traffic movement.
- To curtail loitering.
- To reduce litter.
- To improve street cleaning.

4. Public relations:

   - To convince Market Street property owners and businessmen of the benefits they will receive - in increased property values and greater sales volumes - if they invest in a new Market Street by participating in the program.
   - To convince the community that an efficient and attractive Market Street is important to the city as a whole.
   - To encourage City officials to put their confidence in the future of Market Street and to lend the necessary public support for its revitalization.

Action could begin at once on any of these facets. But the plan of action must aim at carrying out all phases in a carefully thought-out, coordinated program.

The Program

If the program is to be effective, it must be a joint private-public effort. The Market Street interests and the City and County of San Francisco must share the responsibilities and costs. The property owners and businessmen should take the initiative and exercise continuing leadership in preparing and carrying out the improvement plan. Specifically, the private responsibilities will include:

- Economic and real estate analyses.
- Designs for the improvement of every block.
- Designs for street furniture and landscaping.
- Financial feasibility studies.
- Coordinating public and private improvement projects.
- An effective public relations and promotion program.
- Supporting the Police Department in enforcing litter and loitering laws and screening of operating permits.

The City will be concerned with the design and construction of the public works that will improve Market Street and the adjacent downtown area. Specifically, City responsibilities will include:

- Integrating the City's downtown plan with Market Street's development program.
- Detailed designs for the Ferry Park area and the Market-Powell-5th Street area.

- Coordination of the Golden Gateway and South of Market redevelopment projects with the Market Street improvement plan.
- Scheduling public improvements such as street landscaping, plazas, arcades, and parking garages to tie in with private projects.
- Improving mass transit and speeding traffic flow on Market Street.
- Enforcement programs of the Police Department and other City departments to eliminate violations of the litter and loitering laws, the building code, and other ordinances.
- Evaluation of building codes and standards, zoning and sign regulations, and others that affect remodelling and new construction.
- Evaluation of assessment practices as they affect Market Street's current problems and future plans.

The City should designate a high official to coordinate City actions with plans of the Market Street group. City funds should be appropriated to assist in the preparation of plans and programs, and recommended public works should be scheduled in the City's Capital Improvement Program to guarantee their timely construction.

The Next Step

As the next step in carrying out the development program, the present Steering Committee will be formally organized as a permanent Market Street Development Committee with broad representation from property owners, large firms, and small businesses. The Committee will estimate the amounts needed to finance the studies and plans recommended in this report and to hire a full time project coordinator. Funds will be sought from Market Street property owners and business firms and from the City. An equitable formula will be devised for private and public participation.

The next steps the Committee will take are:

- Recruitment of the coordinator.
- Consultation with property owners and businessmen planning improvements.
- Establishment of liaison with City Hall, the Police Department, and the Bay Area Rapid Transit District.
- Negotiating contracts for economic and design studies for Market Street improvement.
- Negotiating contracts for preparing designs for new street furniture.
- Preparing agreements to be entered into by property owners and businessmen to achieve more effective use of private signs.
- Evaluation of Market Street assessment policies and practices.

The essential ingredient of a successful development program is a commitment by the Market Street interests to assume leadership and to take action. Now is the time!

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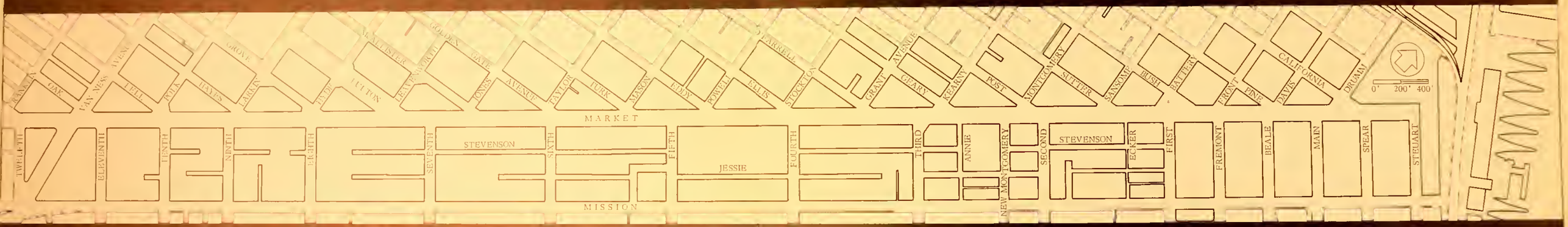
The drawings of suggested improvements in this report represent ideas that are worthy of study; they are not intended as specific proposals.



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JONES
AVENUE
TAYLOR
TURK
MASON
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ELLIS
STOCKTON
FARRELL
GRANT AVENUE
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NEW MONTGOMERY
SECOND
STEVENSON
ECKER
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FREMONT
BEALE
MAIN
SPEAR
STEUART
MISSION

Market Street Yesterday and Today

San Francisco is the great world-city of the West, and Market Street is San Francisco's most important thoroughfare. It has played this role since the mid-19th century when Jasper O'Farrell laid out the 120-foot artery cutting diagonally across the grid iron street system established earlier to the north. Seen from surrounding hilltops or from the air, Market Street from the Ferry Building to Twin Peaks is the dominant element in the pattern of the city. Because of its focal location most of the downtown transit lines converge on Market Street. It is San Francisco's ceremonial avenue, the line of march for major parades. It is the city's place of public celebration. New Years Eve on Market Street is a local tradition. On V-J Day and on other great occasions the crowds instinctively have gathered there. For many decades Market Street was the commercial heart of the city and its showcase to the world. But in recent years Market Street has changed - and not always for the better. Recognition of this fact and of the tremendous values that are at stake have led to this study of the need for Market Street improvement.

The purpose of the study is to determine what steps must be taken to ensure a prosperous financial future for Market Street - a goal that is equally important for Market Street businessmen and property owners and for the City. The portion of Market Street selected for examination is the principal high value commercial frontage from the Embarcadero to Van Ness Avenue. More than six per cent of the City's total assessed valuation is concentrated here. While it is customary to discuss this part of Market Street as if it were a unit, between the Embarcadero and Van Ness there really are five different Market Streets.

The Five Market Streets

1. Gateway Sector

The lower end of Market west to Drumm and Main Streets is primarily oriented to the waterfront. Except for the World Trade Center in the remodelled north wing of the Ferry Building and the block-long Southern Pacific Building, most of the structures are small and are in from fair to very poor condition. Until the bridges were built, the Ferry Building was the principal gateway to San Francisco, and these were thriving blocks. But the end of ferry service led to deterioration of the area. Now this part of Market Street is quiet. There is relatively little traffic, and there are few pedestrians except during weekday rush hours when Marin commuters terminate at the Ferry Building. At night the area is deserted except for seamen returning to their ships and elderly male pensioners who live in nearby cheap hotels.

2. Financial Sector

At Drumm and Main Streets the character of Market Street changes radically. West to Kearny and 3rd Streets it is a real part of the financial district. Great corporations, including Matson Navigation, Pacific Gas and Electric, Spreckels Sugar, Pacific Greyhound Lines, International Business Machines, Union Pacific Railroad, Union Carbide, Shell Oil, Crown Zellerbach, Wells Fargo Bank, Crocker-Anglo Bank, Bank of America, and the Examiner, have their headquarters or major branch offices on this part of Market Street and on the intersecting corners directly exposed to it. There are seventeen office buildings more than ten stories high, and eight of these are over fifteen stories. The Sheraton-Palace Hotel is a prestigeful anchor on the south side of Market Street.

Although all but twelve of the buildings in this sector are over 40 years old, most of them are in good condition and are well maintained. There are no ground-floor vacancies. Since 1945 on each block from Main to 2nd Street, on both sides of Market, between half a million and a million dollars has been spent on modernization. From New Montgomery to 3rd Street, between three and four million has been invested in alterations. (These are building permit figures; probably more has been spent.)

On weekdays this is a busy portion of Market Street, bustling with prosperous looking businessmen and smartly dressed office girls. Many East Bay commuters walk on Market en route to the Transbay Terminal. At night there is little activity except at the Palace Hotel.

3. Central Retail Sector

From west of Kearny-3rd Streets to west of Powell-5th Streets, Market Street assumes a different role; it is primarily part of the central retail district. Most of the stores cater to the mass market; there are no exclusive specialty shops. The north frontage of the blocks between Kearny and Stockton Streets is occupied by high-grade retail stores and banks, some with offices above them. However, the south side of the street between 3rd and 4th mainly is of a lower quality. Two penny arcades, a cheap movie theater and one that features risque films tend to downgrade this block. The Central Tower and Bank of America are the only high-rise office buildings. The site of the recently demolished State Theater is used for underground and surface parking.

AMERICA
LIFORNIA SCHOOL
BEAUTY CULTURE
PERMANENT WAVE
4

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BACHELO
TOM
PEEPI
IS
PEEP
TO
BACH
tom peeping

SALVATION ARMY
TREE OF LIGHTS
79

Market Street's most vital retail block is between Stockton-4th Streets and Powell-5th Streets. Here are clustered the largest volume Woolworth store in the world, the Emporium, Hales, Samuels Jewelers, Sommer and Kaufman, Lerners, Milens, [illegible], Leeds, and Zukors. Intense retail activity continues across 5th Street on the south side where Penneys is located. Both the 12-story Flood Building and the [illegible]-story Pacific Building occupy sites of over a half acre.

No new buildings have been constructed in this sector of Market Street since 19[illegible], but there has been considerable remodelling - between one and two million dollars worth since 1945 on both sides of the 4th-5th Street blocks and between [illegible] five million dollars worth on the 4th-5th Street block (building permit figures).

The sidewalks are thronged with pedestrians during the day and on shopping nights, as one would expect on the busiest retail street. The typical crowd looks like a cross-section of urban America. There are not many exquisitely dressed women, but there are relatively few derelicts. After store hours this part of Market Street becomes quieter, but there still is an overflow of window-shopping pedestrians from the amusement sector.

4. Amusement Sector

West of Powell-5th Streets the character of Market Street [illegible] changes. There are 18 moving picture theaters, including most of the first-run houses, in the blocks west of Hyde-8th Streets. Once these theaters (and the [illegible] further up Market) were opulent amusement palaces drawing crowds from all parts of the city. Since the advent of television, Market Street movie patronage has declined sharply.

Although it is within a few hundred feet of some of the city's most valuable retail property, the north side of Market between Powell and Mason mainly is occupied by poor quality tenants including a penny arcade. The blocks between Mason and Jones [illegible] are no better. On the south side of Market there are several high volume chain stores, including [illegible] Dollar, Kress, and Walgreens, between 5th and 6th Streets, but the rest of the establishments are only of fair quality. The only high-rise office building in this sector is at the southeast corner of Market and 6th.

Except for Walgreen's strong chain outlet, the block between 6th and 7th Streets is devoted primarily to low-grade commercial uses. Near the U.S.O. is a penny arcade, and further up the block are two theaters featuring risque movies. Conditions are even worse on the north side blocks between Jones and Hyde and on the south side from 7th Street west to the new Towne House. The Jones-Leavenworth block houses a penny arcade and three magazine stands featuring "girlie" magazines. A concentration of outlets catering to servicemen's tastes has resulted from the proximity of the Greyhound Bus Terminal. Except for the theaters, all of the frontage on these blocks is occupied by low quality tenants. Between Leavenworth and Hyde there even is a pawn shop. It is not surprising that stores and offices in the Orpheum Theater Building are vacant.

Most of the buildings on Market Street between 5th and 8th were constructed before 1920. The larger theaters and a few other structures were built in the twenties. Investment in modernization since 1945 has been smaller than in the other sectors: between one and two million dollars on both sides of Market from 5th to 6th, between five hundred thousand and a million dollars from 6th to 7th, and only between one hundred thousand and five hundred thousand dollars from 7th to 8th Streets (building permit figures).

By day the crowds in the amusement sector are smaller than in the shopping district and markedly less prosperous-looking. The proximity of the tenderloin is fairly evident. At night, particularly on weekend nights, the young people arrive. The movies, the penny arcades, and principally the bright lights, the glamour, and the excitement of Market Street attract a predominately young crowd including many servicemen and people new in town. The boys prowl Market Street looking for excitement - and for girls; the girls prowl Market Street looking for excitement - and for boys. Generally their behavior is not disorderly. According to the Police Department, there are few arrests for drunkenness or other violations of the law. Market Street is where these young people go at night because, in the words of one police officer, "It is their club."

One problem created by the kind of patronage this part of Market Street attracts is litter. The sidewalks and gutters are spotted with gum and candy wrappers, popcorn bags, and theater ticket stubs. Trash receptacles are available, but frequently they are not used.

5. General Commercial Sector

From 8th Street west to Van Ness Avenue, Market Street is developed with an assortment of commercial uses. Proximity of the civic center, with its convention facilities, a[illegible]-

count for the presence of the recently modernized Whitcomb Hotel and the new Towne House motor-hotel with ground-level parking on a three acre site extending to Mission Street. The Whitcomb and a large parking lot (advertised for sale) occupy most of the frontage between 8th and 9th. Across the street, between Hyde and Larkin, is a very bad commercial block with several vacancies.

The Fox Theater flanked by two parking lots fills the block between Larkin and Polk. This super-colossal, ornately decorated relic of Hollywood circa 1929, is scheduled to be torn down and replaced by a 16-story office building. Opposite the Fox between 9th and 10th Streets is the relatively new, well maintained wholesale Merchandise Mart, a block-long nine story structure. The frontage on the north side of Market Street from Polk to Van Ness Avenue is mainly devoted to poor quality commercial outlets, there are two vacant stores. On the southwest corner of Market and 10th, several office stories recently have been added to a building, and it has been completely remodelled. West to 11th Street the block face is occupied by fair quality commercial outlets including a large surplus store. The new eight story Bank of America Data Processing Center fills the block between 11th Street and South Van Ness Avenue. The building was designed so that five more stories can be added.

Many of the buildings in this sector of Market Street are only one or two stories high. Two house cheap hotels on the upper floors. Although the Civic Center is adjacent, there are few offices. With the exceptions noted, the buildings are old and their appearance is drab. The garishness and gaiety of the amusement sector are missing from upper Market Street. Except around the theaters and hotels, the area is fairly quiet both by day and at night. Investment in building alterations since 1945 has not exceeded a million dollars (building permit figures) on any of the blocks (both sides) from Hyde-9th Streets to Van Ness Avenue.

Transportation on Market Street

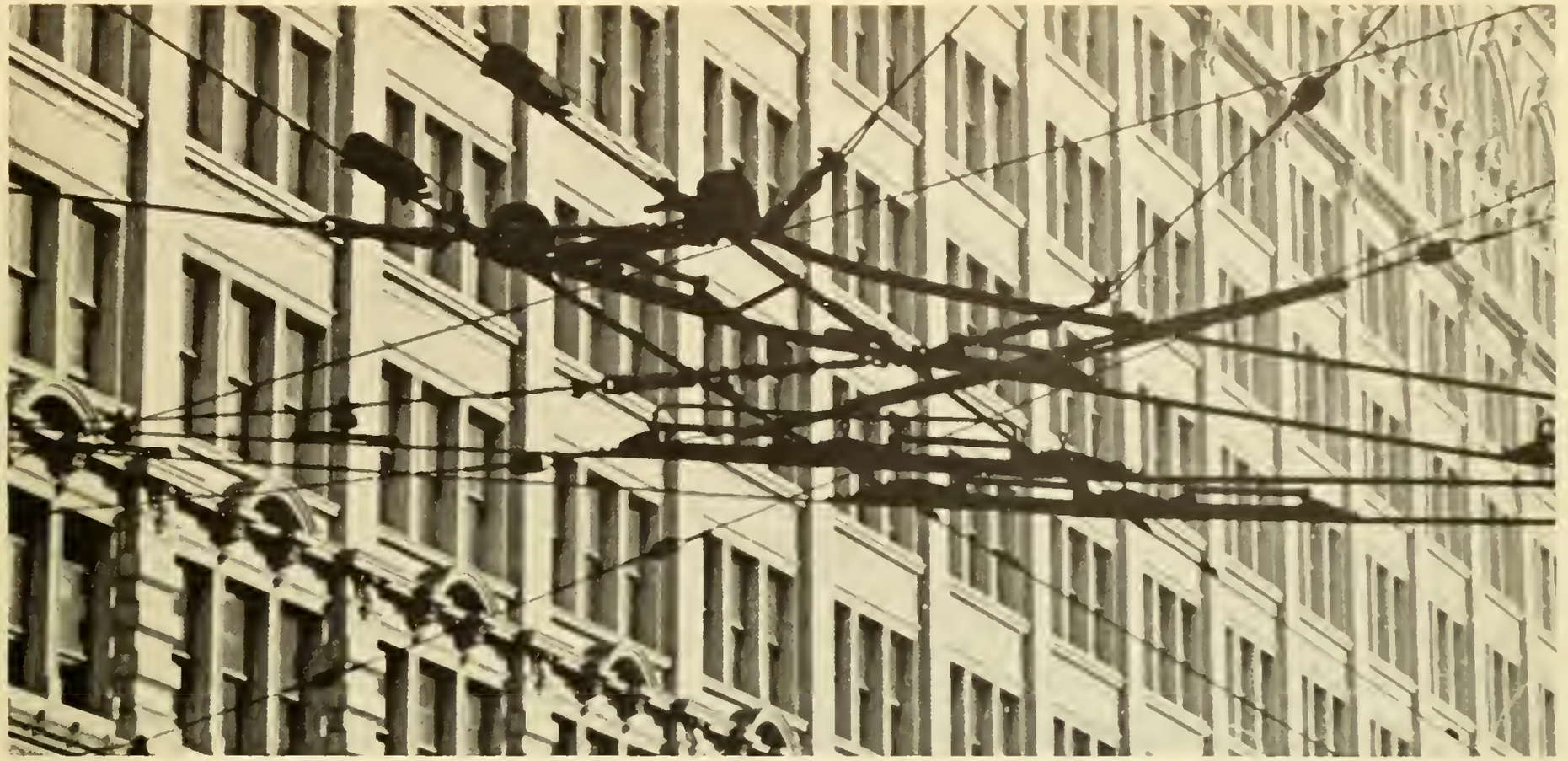
Over 2,000 transit vehicles, carrying 60,000 passengers, run on Market Street on an average weekday. Five street car lines, five trolley coach lines, and six motor coach lines operate along various portions of Market Street east of Van Ness Avenue. In addition, nine other coach lines have short stretches of their one-way loop routes on Market. As a result, transit vehicles represent a substantially higher per cent of total traffic on Market Street than anywhere else in the city.

For a number of reasons Market Street does not carry a very heavy traffic load. Drivers tend to avoid Market because of the delays caused by transit vehicles making stops. Left hand turns are prohibited so that the center lanes can be reserved for street cars. Most establishments on the south side have service access from alleys at the rear, but on the north side trucks double park, causing congestion. Traffic on some of the cross streets, particularly Main, 1st, Fremont, New Montgomery, 3rd, 4th, 9th, 10th and Van Ness Avenue, is many times heavier than traffic on Market Street. Pedestrian movements across Market are extremely heavy in the financial and shopping sectors. There are frequent, irregularly spaced, complicated intersections, all of them signalized. The lights are synchronized, but they do not ease the flow of automobile traffic because they are set to facilitate transit movements and to favor the heavy cross traffic, and also because of the varying distances between intersections.

Driving across Market Street at the jogged intersections is a harrowing experience for the unitiated. The worst congestion on Market occurs at the 5th-Powell-Eddy-Mason-Turk complex. Elsewhere congestion is no worse than moderate except during the peak hours, mainly in the evening.

While the pedestrian once was king on Market Street, recently in order to move traffic at some of the three way intersections, it has been necessary to install lagging phase signals. At some points on the north side, the pedestrian must walk from the curb to a traffic island and then wait for another light before he can cross to the other side. At other intersections the crosswalks force the pedestrian to traverse two sides of the triangle, waiting for two signals, although his objective lies along the hypotenuse.

There are no parking facilities on Market Street except under the new office buildings between Davis and Front and the Crown Zellerbach Building, and the open parking lots at the Towne House and Whitcomb Hotels and on the Fox Theater block. Possibly, use of the State Theater lot for parking will be temporary. Market Street is fortunate that there are many parking garages and lots within convenient walking distance but not fronting on Market. This avoids interrupting the valuable continuity of commercial frontage and creating the bombed-out look that mars other downtown areas. Most of the parking facilities serving Market Street are concentrated north of the amusement sector and in the blocks south to Mission Street. The multi-level 5th and Mission Garage recently was expanded to 1500 spaces, and more parking structures are in the planning stage.



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TEACHER'S

The Prospects for Market Street

The decline of Market Street is not unique. The same thing has happened to the main streets of many U. S. cities. But in most of these cities all of downtown is in trouble, while in San Francisco downtown has never been more prosperous. Although it is evident that Market Street is going downhill, it is equally clear that its plight is far from hopeless. The Crown Zellerbach Building illustrates this paradox. It is the finest development ever built on Market Street; its plaza is a princely gift to the City. Yet, to avoid having a Market

to include the south side of Market Street between 2nd and 4th, and possibly slightly west of 4th Street. Likely uses of the present project area are offices, data processing centers, commercial enterprises, warehousing, very light manufacturing, parking garages, and possibly a discount department store and a merchandise mart. Timing of the South of Market Project is not definite, but it may be under construction by 1965 and completed in 1968 or 1969.

At the November election the voters of San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa Counties approved construction of the Bay Area Rapid Transit System. All areas that will be served directly or indirectly stand to gain, but none will gain more than Market Street. The rapid transit plans call for a two level subway under Market. On the lower level rapid transit trains will run from the transbay tube to Franklin Street where they will branch off to Mission Street. On the upper level Municipal Railway streetcars will run from a terminal at Front Street to the Twin Peaks Tunnel. The streetcar tracks will be removed from the surface, and the space will become available for other uses. Stations will be located between Sansome and Montgomery Streets, between Stockton and Powell Streets, and between Leavenworth and Larkin Streets for both interurban and local transit. There will be an additional station between Polk Street and Van Ness Avenue for Municipal Railway streetcars.

Between the upper subway level and the street level there will be a continuous pedestrian mezzanine extending from Front Street to Van Ness, if the conventional cut-and-cover method of construction is used. However, it may prove possible and desirable to compact the sand and to bore the subway without opening Market Street except at the stations. If the latter construction method is used, there will be 700 foot long mezzanines at the stations instead of a continuous mezzanine.

The Market Street subway will be built in 1965-67 and will be in operation, along with the transbay tube, in 1967. Construction of the subway will not unduly disrupt Market Street. At least two traffic lanes will remain open at all times, and streetcars will continue to run. Construction will be done in sections; no portion of the street will be dug up more than four to eight weeks. Cuts will be planked over while the street is excavated. There will be a minimum of dust and dirt. According to the Rapid Transit District's Engineer, new construction and remodelling can safely proceed without fear of damage from subway construction.

The Municipal Railway plans to continue running P.C.C.-type streetcars in the Market Street subway when it is built.

TOYS
Grayson

LIQUORS
CIGARS
FAST PHOTO FINISHING
SUPER SHOE

PENNEYS

This is the only type of vehicle that operates satisfactorily in the Twin Peaks and Duboce Tunnels. Present motor coach lines will continue to operate on Market Street. The Municipal Railway has not purchased any coaches since 1960 and consequently has none of the latest type. Future orders are contemplated. The new busses probably will be similar to those used on the local lines of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District. No new trolley coaches have been purchased since 1951; evidently this is not San Francisco's local transit vehicle of the future.

Considerably longer-range in nature are the Civic Center expansion plan prepared in 1958 and the Downtown Plan currently in preparation. The Civic Center plan calls for a connection of 7th Street with McAllister to be cut through the Jones-Leavenworth block on Market Street. Leavenworth would be closed from Market to McAllister. All but the east end of the block is to be acquired by the City. East of the new street the plan shows a landscaped area. West of the street to the Federal Building the property is to be used for a parking lot and landscaping. Except for the Orpheum Theater, all of the block between Leavenworth and Hyde is to be acquired for parking.

Long-range plans of this type that do not include specific acquisition schedules tend to have a depressing effect on the properties to be acquired and, in some instances, on surrounding properties as well. Uncertain that they will receive full value and unwilling to risk a court test, owners are loathe to improve their properties and sometimes do not even provide needed maintenance. It is impossible to negotiate long-term leases at standard rentals. The threat of acquisition for Civic Center expansion may at least partly explain the poor condition of the buildings and the low quality of the establishments on the north side of Market from Jones to Hyde.

The Civic Center plan shows the block between Hyde and Larkin developed with a new private commercial building with the design controlled. No other expansion of the Civic Center onto Market Street or across it is proposed. However, the Civil Courts Building is to be located on the Marshall Square block, exposed to Market at Hyde and Grove Streets. Fulton Street is to be closed to traffic and landscaped from Market to Larkin.

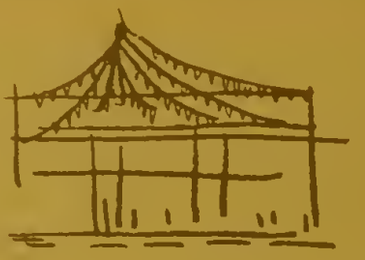
The San Francisco City Planning Department, assisted by Architect Mario Ciampi, currently is working on a Downtown Plan to be completed in June 1963. The plan will include the entire area bounded by Van Ness Avenue, Broadway, the Embarcadero, and Howard Street. The Planning Department is responsible for the following aspects of the plan: pedestrian, automotive, and transit circulation; rapid transit; freeways; parking; redevelopment zoning; and economic and locational studies. The architect is responsible for designing the Portsmouth Plaza area, the Market-Powell-5th Street area, the Civic Center area, and the Ferry Park and Embarcadero area. The designs are intended to illustrate the potentials of these areas, to guide public improvements, and to inspire private projects. The City's program does not include cost estimates of each proposed improvement, financial feasibility studies, construction time schedules, or proposed methods of financing projects.

The Downtown Plan will include architectural and landscape designs for two major Market Street focal points: the Powell-Market-5th Street area and the Ferry Building-Embarcadero area. It also will be necessary for the architect to make certain assumptions about the treatment of the balance of Market Street. Logically Market Street property owners and tenants may wonder whether they need to sponsor a Market Street improvement plan when the City's Downtown Plan will cover a number of the problems that plague Market Street and will include detailed designs for two focal points. The answer is that a privately sponsored improvement plan would serve a different purpose and therefore would vary materially from the Downtown Plan, though it need not be inconsistent with it.

Most important, the need for Market Street improvement is immediate. A 10 year plan or a 20 year plan will not preserve present values or bring necessary changes in the next few years. Consequently the Market Street improvement plan should be short-range in nature, while the Downtown Plan will be long-range, looking a decade or two into the future. While the City's plan will include detailed designs for only two points on Market Street, the private plan should prescribe recommended architectural and landscape treatment for every block in the study area. The improvement plan should focus on individual and group private projects, although related public projects also should be included; while the Downtown Plan will focus on public projects, and its proposals for private improvements will only be inspirational or, possibly, will serve as bases for zoning or other regulations.

Continuous, close coordination of the Market Street improvement plan and the Downtown Plan will be necessary for the success of both. Simultaneous preparation of the short-range, detailed private plan and the long-range, more general, public plan can be mutually advantageous.

Fine, old buildings defaced with tinny SIGNS...

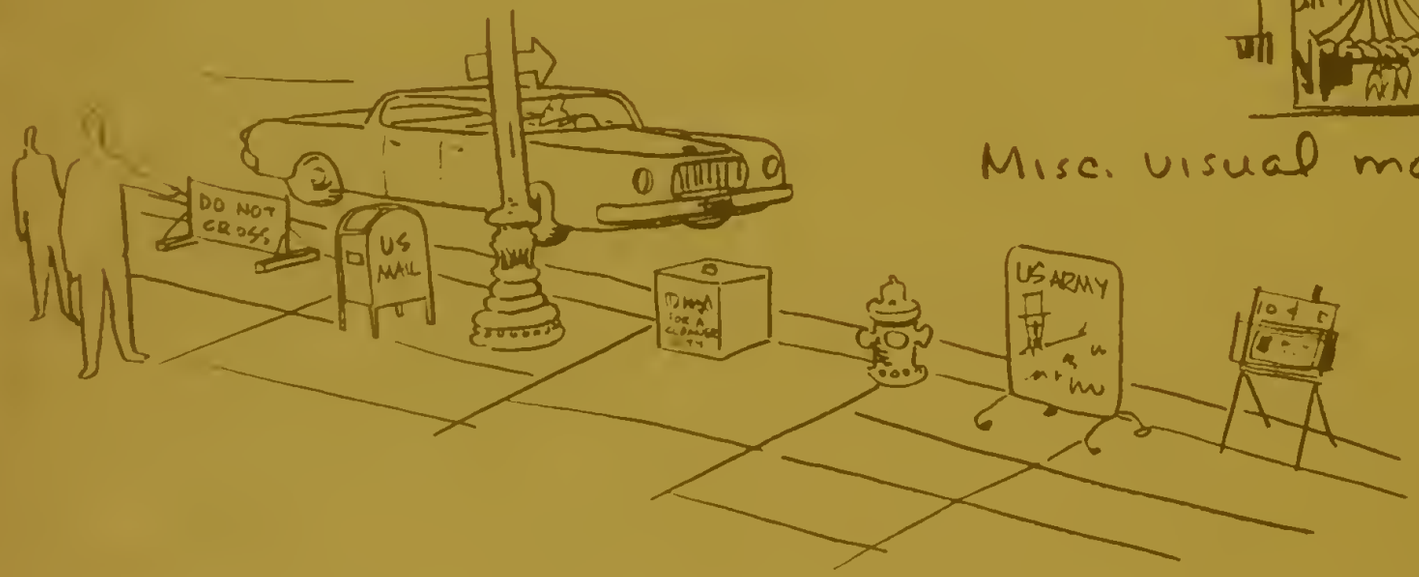


Wind streamers: the gas station look.

Windowr signs like corn-plasters...

Roof-top billboards...

Misc. visual mayhem...



Motley array of street furniture.

Market Street's Financial Picture

Because Market Street is a vital part of downtown San Francisco, the relationships of Market Street activities and those elsewhere in the central business district, and, in fact, in the entire Bay Area, are important to the economic future of Market Street. The fact that downtown San Francisco has maintained a high degree of central city dominance is demonstrated by a number of economic indicators:

- Despite the development of outlying shopping centers with branches of major downtown stores, central district retail sales volumes have continued to increase.
- Downtown employment is rising and now exceeds a quarter of a million.
- Most of the 3 million square feet of office space constructed in San Francisco since 1950 is concentrated downtown.
- Major freeway connections have greatly speeded access to the central district.
- New garages and parking lots have provided thousands of additional parking spaces downtown.
- Although San Francisco lost population between 1950 and 1960, new high-rise apartments under construction on Nob Hill and Russian Hill and in the Golden Gateway will strengthen the economic support base of the central business district.
- New hotels, such as the Towne House, Jack Tar, Fairmont Tower, and Hilton, create additional patronage for downtown restaurants and entertainment, retail, and service establishments.

Downtown San Francisco's regional dominance is the product of the interaction of factors such as these. Financial gains to both property owners and tenants have resulted. As an important part of the central business district, Market Street can share in these gains. There are three principal economic reasons why there is a strong potential demand for Market Street locations:

1. Business headquarters and financial institutions need central locations in the metropolitan core.
2. Prime sites are in short supply because of the compactness of the central business district, but there are sites of sufficient size for large buildings on Market Street.
3. Transit service is excellent, and parking facilities are located conveniently nearby.

Careful study of real estate trends in San Francisco, and possibly in other regional capitals, will be necessary to determine the extent to demand by different types of businesses for Market Street sites and whether the market will grow stronger in the future. However, it is evident that demand will be influenced by the quality of the environment as well as by such economic factors as site availability, land prices, and investment and tax goals of developers.

Assessed valuations on Market Street between the Embarcadero and Van Ness Avenue exceed $75 million, representing a market value over $320 million. It is significant that while total improvements values are more than double land values citywide, on Market Street they are nearly equal. Land values account for almost 10 per cent of the city's total, but improvements values account for only 4.5 per cent. Assessments reflect actual conditions; Market Street land value is underdeveloped.

The land values on lower Market Street from the Embarcadero to Drumm-Main appear to be holding relatively steady, and have greater potential because of the Golden Gateway redevelopment program. However, in the financial sector from Drumm-Main to Kearny-3rd Streets, land values already are higher than the pre-World War II and immediate post-war levels. A University of California Real Estate Research report indicated that front foot land values on Market Street between 1st and 2nd Streets ranged from $3,000 to $8,500 in 1960 compared with $2,500 to $3,500 during the 1925-30 period, and $2,500 to $4,000 in the early 1950's. Even after adjustment for changes in the value of the dollar, it appears that the upper range in 1960 was higher than the levels during the earlier periods. Such increases in land values apparently result from price-pressure created by recent real estate transactions and from construction of new office buildings in the vicinity of Market Street.

The financial interests of Market Street would be best served by encouraging the maximum amount of office building and financial institution construction between the Embarcadero and Kearny-3rd Streets, but there also is a strong potential for these types of land uses in the sectors to the west.

The retail sector of Market Street still is one of the most important merchandising concentrations in downtown San Francisco. The popular price stores on Market Street are a vital element of the retailing strength of the central business district. Of the six major downtown department stores, three are located on Market. However, Hales is scheduled to move out. Typically department stores are the major customer-generators in central business districts and regional shopping centers because of their large size, merchandise selection, credit policies, advertising coverage, and customer loyalties. The "pull" of department stores benefits the smaller retailers and causes sales volumes and land values to rise.

The total retail strength of a business district or shopping center is greater than the sum of the strength of its parts. As the number of department stores increases, their magnetism grows disproportionately stronger. Rarely will an out-of-town department store be available to take over space abandoned by a tenant that goes out of business. However logically one of the objectives of a Market Street improvement program should be recruitment of strong retail outlets to occupy the strategically located space vacated by Hales.

Between Kearny-3rd and Powell-5th Streets, Market Street property values have tended to be relatively stable over the past 30 years. However, a few years ago assessed valuations were reduced slightly, probably reflecting a downward trend in retail sales and store and office rents. Lack of new construction and failure to modernize stores, particularly smaller outlets, indicate a weakening of the retail sector. Such deficiencies tend to be contagious; A doesn't remodel because B doesn't. Another source of infection is conversion of store buildings to penny arcades, hot dog stands, and 'girlie" magazine stands. These kinds of establishments discourage new investment and repel desirable neighbors.

It appears that despite the fact that downtown San Francisco remains strong, the retail sector of Market Street is declining in vigor. An effort should be made to reverse this trend. A successful movement to enhance the retail commercial aspects of the street would give property values the biggest boost. The first step would be to determine the market opportunities for new and expanded stores and service establishments. If it turned out that major retail expansion is not practical, an alternative method of arresting the trend toward marginal commercial uses would be conversion of store space into offices and financial institutions.

ORTHS

Remodelling of two large buildings at Market and Kearny, at the edge of the retail sector, for savings and loan association offices indicates the possibilities.

The decline of motion picture theater patronage is a national phenomenon. In the U. S. movie attendance reached its peak (90 million weekly) in the first few years after the war. Recently audiences have dwindled to about 40 million weekly, this during a period of rapid population increase.

The theaters are a genuine asset to Market Street because they attract nighttime visitors. Though the typical movie patron may not spend a large amount of money, the crowds create an air of activity during the hours when other downtown streets are deserted. An analysis should be made of the future of the motion picture business on Market Street, and a program should be formulated to increase patronage as much as possible. However, if the study demonstrates that there is a surplus of theater space, conversion to other uses should be considered. There is no simple answer to the problem of how to use the abandoned theater. The State Theater site now is a parking lot. In other cities, theaters have been converted to bowling alleys, furniture stores, and supermarkets.

Because San Francisco is a convention center and an entertainment capital, it would be logical to explore the possibilities of converting surplus moving picture theaters into legitimate theaters, meeting halls, theater-restaurants, or night clubs. These and similar types of establishments could take advantage of the bright-lights atmosphere of the amusement sector, as well as the proximity of hotels and the availability of transit service. This portion of Market Street might be turned into a "show street", a mecca for tourists like the Broadway-Columbus Avenue area. If people with more money to spend were attracted, restaurants, bars, and gift shops would find Market Street a profitable location.

Although many properties in the general commercial sector (Hyde-8th Streets to Van Ness Avenue) are in deplorable condition the outlook for this area is not entirely bleak. Construction of the Towne House and modernization of the Whitcomb Hotel are hopeful signs. The Bank of America Data Processing Center and the Merchandise Mart are typical of large space-using facilities for which this is a suitable location. Civic Center expansion will eliminate some of the blight and should stimulate construction of offices and other related establishments on both the north and south sides of Market Street. A study should be made of the most suitable kinds of uses for this sector. With land values significantly lower than in the retail and financial sectors and good transit service available (one interurban and two local subway stations are planned), it may well be possible to attract additional hotels, data processing centers, and other uses that need close-in but not central locations.

Downtown Improvement Programs

In recent years, main street and central district improvement programs have been undertaken in a number of major cities. Some of the programs now are in the action stage, and others already have been completed. These efforts range in scope all the way from face-lifting and "exterior decoration" to major clearance and redevelopment projects. A significant number of the programs have been sponsored by private or semi-public organizations. The activities of New York's Fifth Avenue Association over many decades provided a model for other main street improvement programs.

Chicago: The State Street Council has been responsible for improvement of the street's appearance by encouraging remodelling and providing kiosks information booths, and new street lighting. The Council has been successful in persuading the City to develop new parking facilities. Council funds are raised by assessing dues based on annual sales volumes of member stores. The Greater North Michigan Avenue Association has sponsored a landscaping program and lighting displays. It has been instrumental in promoting construction of new buildings on and near North Michigan Avenue and has secured City-financed parking facilities to serve the area. The Association's membership dues are based on property values.

Kalamazoo: The first permanent downtown pedestrian mall in the U. S. and new parking facilities were financed principally by merchants' and City contributions. A 15 per cent sales increase in the first year after completion of the mall led to creation of the Downtown Kalamazoo Redevelopment Corporation which will sponsor additional improvements.

Miami Beach: The Lincoln Road Mall Association developed an elaborately landscaped, eight block mall at a cost of $600,000. Double decked parking lots were located adjacent to Lincoln Road prior to construction of the mall. The project was financed by an assessment district, the mall is maintained by the City.

Knoxville: The Downtown Knoxville Association is sponsoring a $14 million improvement program including the Gay Street Promenade and Market Square Mall projects, remodelling and enlarging the major department store, construc-

tion of new parking facilities, and landscaping. Already the Promenade has been completed at a cost of $750,000, and a [illegible] buildings have had their facies lifted.

Rochester: Midtown Plaza in downtown Rochester was [illegible] by the two leading department stores with the City cooperating. Unsetered around an air-conditioned pedestrian [illegible] and one 18-story office building and hotel, a telephone company building, and new retail space, in addition to the existing stores which have been completely modernized. A 2,000 car underground garage is an integral part of the project.

Pittsburgh: The Allegheny Conference, a group of private business leaders, working closely with public agencies, has backed major redevelopment of the downtown area including Mellon Square and the 300-acre Golden Triangle project, now complete.

Philadelphia: The spectacular downtown renewal program includes both private and private-public projects. Penn Center, a $100 million development of stores, office buildings, a [illegible], and [illegible] was constructed on Pennsylvania Mainland [illegible] private financing. Independence Mall and other [illegible] redevelopment projects are publicly sponsored.

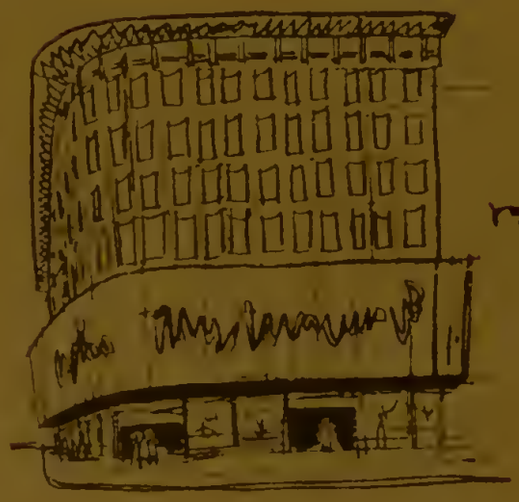
Minneapolis: Now on the drawing boards is a unique plan for the improvement of Nicollet Avenue, the principal shopping street. A new block mall, with two lanes left open for [illegible] and other vehicles, will be built at a cost of about $7 million. The Downtown Council of Minneapolis, a private association, is the sponsor.

Washington, D.C.: Downtown Progress (the National Capital Downtown Committee), another private group, prepared a comprehensive improvement plan for the central district this year. One of the immediate results of the plan was the President's appointment of a committee representing both public and private interests to make specific recommendations on the improvement of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Certain characteristics are common to all the successful main street and downtown improvement programs. Although many of them were [illegible] and financed privately, in each case there has been at least strong city cooperation, and in a number of instances the city has participated. Another essential is close cooperation of property owners and [illegible] in the area to be improved, but going along with the crowd really is not enough to get the job done. There must be leadership, enthusiasm, understanding, and willingness to work and to spend if the media of some short-sighted people and the opposition of others are to be overcome.

Unhappily remodelled buildings that try to look like new ones.

Story-and-a-half tall signs that obliterate buildings.



Ground-floor remodelling unrelated to the rest of the building.

2 NEW COLOR SPE
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The Look of Market Street

Although there are some bright spots on Market Street, its appearance leaves a great deal to be desired. In a city known for its beauty, Market Street inspires no admiration and perhaps it arouses a little shame. Its ugliness is of several kinds. Old buildings of no particular merit merely have been allowed to deteriorate; handsome structures built 30 years ago or more have been unsympathetically remodelled or vulgarized with blatant signs; and new buildings of undistinguished design have replaced old ones. The things that make streets beautiful - trees, flowers, fountains sculpture, artful illumination, well designed commercial displays - are largely lacking on Market Street. The things that make streets ugly - gaudy store fronts, chaotic jumbles of signs, festoons of overhead wires, conglomerations of street furniture, trash and litter - are all too prevalent.

Let's take a walk up Market Street, this time looking at it through the eyes of an architect and a landscape architect, and see what needs to be done to enhance its appearance and to give each sector a distinctive visual character.

A Walk Up Market Street

Start at the Embarcadero. The waterfront is almost a misnomer, for the Freeway and the Ferry Building have created an impenetrable barrier, at street level, to one of San Francisco's most priceless assets - its marine setting. If rapport with the Bay cannot be established by removing one or both wings of the Ferry Building, as suggested in an early Ferry Park study, at least there should be a ground level arcade where one could get through to the water and, once there, gain an observation point.

It is important that the "beginning" of Market Street have a unique and special flavor. Remember that this area, now filled, was once the harbor. Is there a way that the romance and color of our lusty waterfront can be recreated without tawdryness? The Ferry Building Park could be a great open space with canals, lagoons, and fountains that would revive the marine flavor by actually bringing the Bay back into the area. The atmosphere of European ports could be injected with handsome paving, sidewalk cafes, and fine restaurants. The freeway should be painted dark, and large trees should be planted to suppress its sight and its sounds. Difficult as all this may be, establish the Ferry Building Park area as a vibrant, alive, colorful place, used by day and at night, and it will send a tingle up the spine of Market Street.

As one enters the financial sector, the block between Spear and Main Streets on the south side of Market would be an ideal location for a plaza about 100 feet deep, since it lies between the monumental Southern Pacific and Matson Buildings. Bordering the plaza on the south could soar a very tall building - the mark of an important route into the city core from the Main Street freeway ramp.

The California Street Cable Car Plaza gives a good idea of what can be done to bring delight to Market Street, but unfortunately it is very small. If it could be extended to the fronts of buildings on California Street east of Drumm, where the street is not needed, the plaza might be large enough for a gay pavilion that would increase its visual dominance and provide shelter in the rainy season.

In this sector, the north side of Market Street has an interesting silhouette of buildings of various heights and sizes. The angular, upward vistas of California, Pine, and Bush Streets lend excitement. Except where trees already have been planted in front of the tastefully remodelled building east of Davis Street, street trees are needed, and they well could start up the side streets, creating a green foreground to the glimpses into the heart of the city. Rows of regularly spaced street trees should be planted in front of the Southern Pacific, Matson, and P.G. and E. Buildings to give them proper elegance. But on the north side of Market, trees should be in irregular groups, harmonizing with the varied backgrounds, to lend contrast.

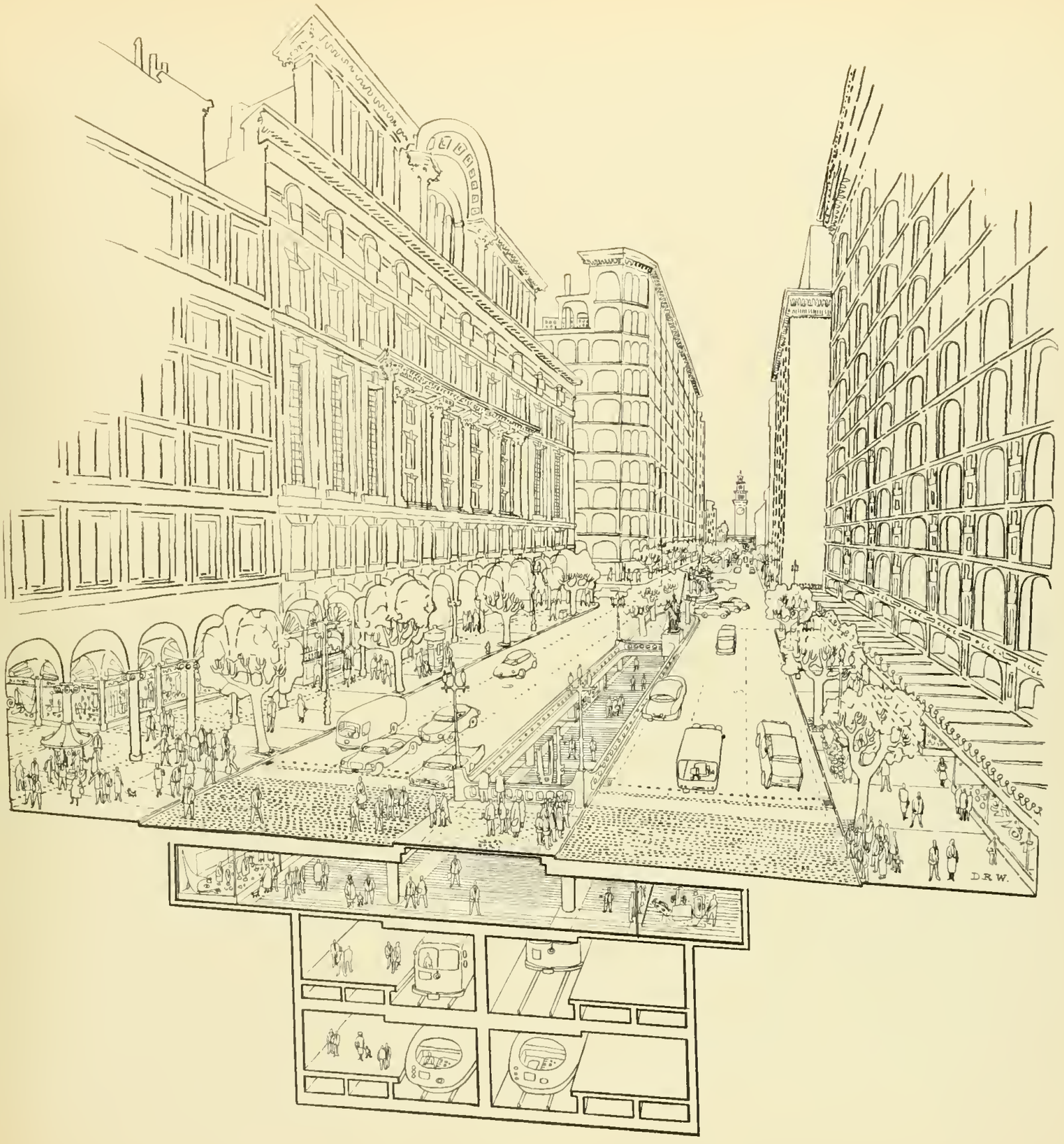
The flood lighting of the dignified, classical P.G. and E. Building at night illustrates the potential of illumination to enrich the street. The handsome light fixtures demonstrate that symbols can be as effective as signs.

From Davis Street west the graceless commercial quality of Market Street emerges. Few of the store fronts are above average in appearance, and some are marred by blatant signs. Distinctive landscape treatment of each block would greatly enhance the appearance of the street. When rapid transit makes it possible to eliminate the streetcar tracks, planted medians with fountains and sculpture can be installed. But no one uniform, parkway-type treatment would be appropriate on Market Street. It should have a series of carefully designed urban landscape incidents, integrated and organized, but not uniform as on New York's Park Avenue.

At the wide intersection of Davis Street, there is a wonderful opportunity for a punctuation point such as a fountain or a monument. The handsome Spreckels Building would benefit from tree planting and paving enrichment. At the narrow corner of the I.B.M. Building, on Front Street, trees and flowers are badly needed to soften the austere facade.

Looking back at this point, one wishes that the Ferry Tower would rise out of treetops instead of abruptly appearing above the freeway. But how much more stimulating is this

When the rapid transit subway makes it possible to eliminate the streetcar tracks, planted islands with fountains and sculpture can be installed in the middle of the street. No one uniform, parkway type of treatment, but rather a series of carefully designed landscape incidents, would be appropriate. With rapid transit stations open to the sky, Market Street would gain a unique dimension. On the north side are recessed store fronts and a pedestrian arcade; on the south side, a uniform canopy. Trees are planted on both sides.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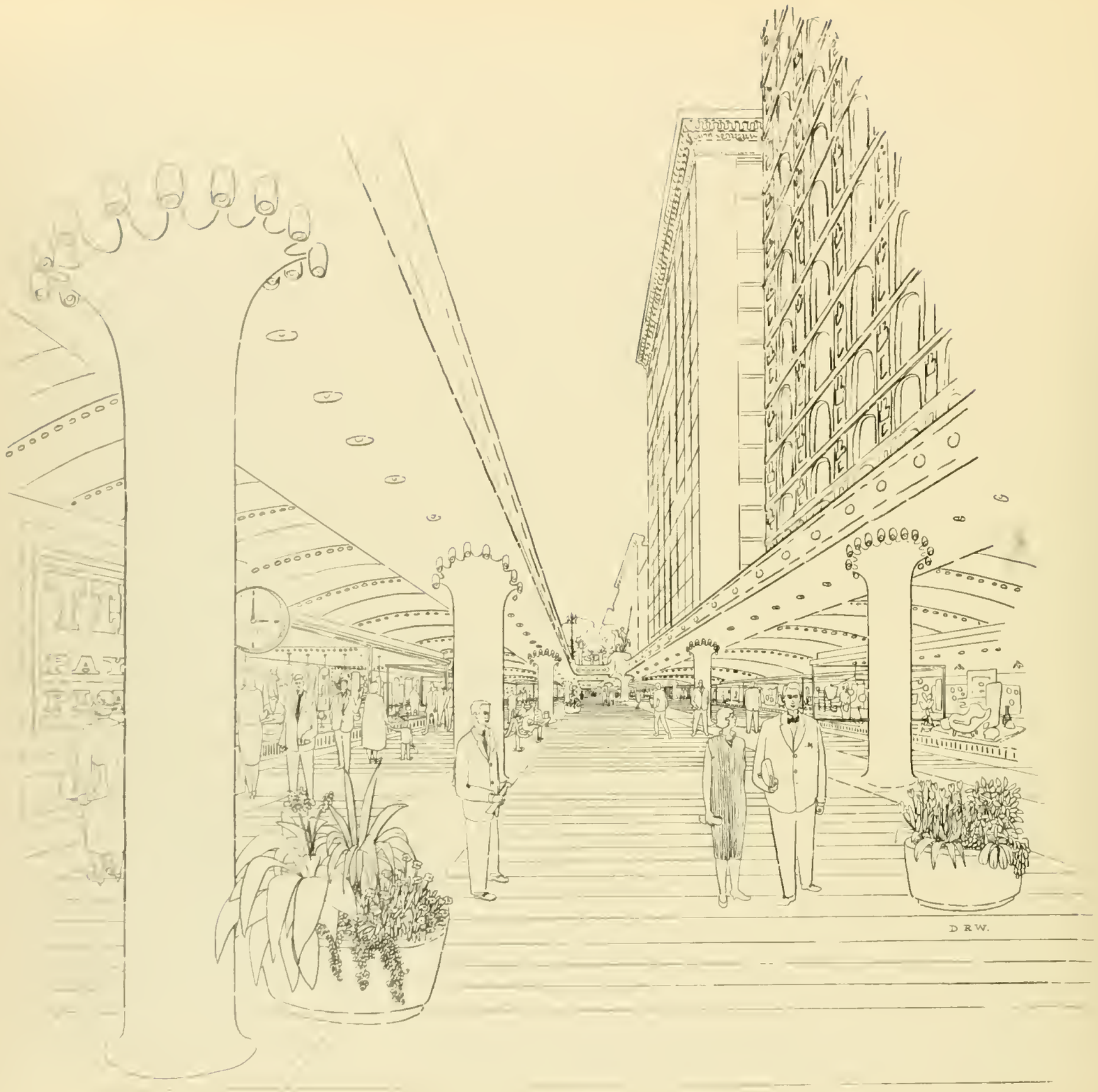
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view than the vistas southward on Main, Beale, and Fremont Streets that disappear without visual accent into a jumble of unkempt buildings, parking lots, and bridge ramps! At least, at the end of 1st Street, the "76" tower gives the vista a much-needed punch. Tree planting, at least as far south as Mission, would greatly enhance the appearance of these side streets.

At Battery Street, the treatment of the Mechanics Monument is one of the best examples of urban design in the City. Like the Cable Car Plaza, this island could be enlarged by taking over the unnecessary street space to the north.

The Crown Zellerbach Plaza is a delight. Notice what a send-off it gives one up Sansome Street! On balmy days the plaza wall is such a popular seat that one wonders whether benches should be added. Night lighting of the trees would further enhance this unique jewel of Market Street. The triangular island at Sansome and Sutter should be landscaped and, possibly, connected with the block to the east. Need it only be a concrete roosting place for the wary walker?

Ecker Street could be a pleasant pedestrian link with Mission Street. The public library on Market deserves more recognition than a converted store front gives it. The "TOYS" sign on this block is a prize example of a sign that begot a sign that begot a sign! Good sign design alone could do wonders for Market Street. When will the sign manufacturers learn the lesson that the advertising and packaging industries learned so long ago?

The Market-Montgomery-Post Street intersection is one of the busiest. It deserves a fountain, a piece of sculpture, planting. The pipe barricades that restrain pedestrians are ugly; bollards with chains could do the same job handsomely. The Palace Hotel gives a feeling of richness to this intersection, and its night lighting (except for the roof sign) is superb - an oasis in the midst of gloom. But the building would be greatly enhanced by planting large trees on Market, New Montgomery, and Annie Streets. Across Market between Montgomery and Kearny, low canopies would make an attractive contrast. How pleasant it would be if all the merchants on this block got together and put up awnings of harmonious color and design! The one on the Bonanza Book Store should be copied by its neighbors in the same building.

The pedestrian concourse level of the subway could be made joyful, safe, (and profitable) by opening it to the sky in the middle of the street when the car tracks are removed. The concourse would have fresh air and sunshine. Along both sides could be small shops, booths, and stands set back far enough from the open area to leave space for covered walks. There would be entrances to the stores on Market Street above and show windows displaying their merchandise.

At Montgomery will be located one of the five local streetcar and three interurban rapid transit subway stations on Market Street. Except in Moscow, Buenos Aires, and Toronto, subway stations are traditionally sinister, gloomy, subterranean passageways. In fact, the San Francisco Police Department already has expressed misgivings about the possibility of a continuous pedestrian mezzanine. This level of the subway could be made joyful, safe, (and profitable) by opening it to the sky in the middle of the street when the car tracks are removed. The pedestrian concourse would have fresh air and sunlight; it could be planted. Along both sides could be small shops, booths, and stands set back far enough from the open area to leave space for covered walks. And, of course, there would be entrances to the stores on Market Street above and show windows displaying their merchandise. If there were escalator access to these concourses, many people would use them instead of waiting for the signal to change before crossing the street - and some would stop to patronize the commercial outlets. The mezzanine would be lively and attractive, and would produce substantial income for the Rapid Transit District. And with the stations open to the sky, Market Street would gain a unique dimension that would add to its visual appeal.

The Kearny-Geary Street intersection, an important gateway into the heart of the shopping district, conveys only chaos: pedestrian, vehicular, and visual. Lovely Lotta's Fountain is lost in the hubbub. It could be moved to another site, but this is where Tetrazzini sang. So why can't the fountain, on its tight little island, be given a fighting chance? Across the street, the Examiner, a very significant building, is cluttered and almost anonymous at street level. The more important a building, the more clean-cut its image should be. The Owl Drug sign at the southwest corner is two-dimensional mayhem. We would rather not look down 3rd Street, but there is nothing to block the view of this degraded patch in the city's fabric. Would a dias or a kiosk for the policeman usually stationed in the intersection and a change of pavement in the crosswalk divert attention from what lies beyond? When the South of Market project area is redeveloped, transforming 3rd Street into a landscaped boulevard

linking the central district and the S.P. station should be considered.

Grant Avenue offers probably the most inviting vista of all the streets that intersect Market. Why? The handsome American Trust Company on the west corner teams with the Union Trust Building on the east corner to make an elegant portal to an elegant shopping street. Take a good look at San Francisco's most handsome mailbox in front of the American Trust. How compatible it is with the building it serves - a splendid example of street furniture design. Across the street and up the block Liebes' awnings demonstrate what canvas can do to enhance a building's appearance. Now stand on Grant Avenue, and look south across Market Street at the four low buildings that terminate the view. Imagine them set back 50 feet to make room for a little "mall" with greenery, special paving, and a kiosk or flower stand, and a high-rise building behind. This kind of improvement might attract the Grant Avenue ladies to shop across Market Street.

The unhappy block between 3rd and 4th Streets has a faded, chaotic visual character, despite some high class tenants. Arcades, new canopies, interesting paving, and street trees would help. The lofty Bank of America building should have its face washed (not lifted) and its dome gilded, for it is a handsome landmark on the weak side of Market Street.

The north side between Grant and Stockton is dominated by Roos-Atkins; it has been tastefully unified with adjacent stores almost to the point of dullness. Moral: A retail shopping area needs variety; uniformity, even when well done, can be deadly.

The parking lot on the State Theater site suggests what could be accomplished by creating a landscaped plaza, with a garage beneath, breaking the march of (existing) buildings and (proposed) street trees up Market. Both a new building on Stevenson Street and the Bank of America could front on the plaza, in effect doubling the "Market Street frontage" and enhancing the values of all surrounding properties. Another advantage of the plaza: it would begin to reach over to Mission, a street that runs blindly on its way with never a tie to Market. (The simple sign "PARK" on the new parking lot is one of the most effective on the street.) The same type of plaza with a high-rise building south of it on Stevenson Street, which could be arcaded with traffic running through - also would be appropriate in a mid-block location. Here it would treble the amount of valuable frontage and probably far more than pay for itself.

In front of the Emporium, Market Street is a pleasant place. The appearance of this handsome building will be enhanced by the recently planted street trees. There should be special paving across the sidewalk and extending across the street in the crosswalk to recognize the dominance of pedestrian over vehicular traffic at this location.

The view north on Powell Street, with Nob Hill in the background, is particularly exciting. How difficult it is to appreciate the scene with all the clutter in the foreground! Even the grand, old Bank of America Building at Powell and Eddy has been defiled with a mammoth timepiece bearing miscellaneous advertising messages. This is only one of many handsome buildings that have been wounded by cheap, tinny, ugly signs that degrade them to the level of their tawdry neighbors. The Crocker-Anglo Bank, the Hibernia Bank, and various branches of the Bank of America all have suffered at the hands of the signmakers.

The flatiron building at Market and Eddy is a horrendous example of how a small but strategically placed building can act as an ashcan for all the visual trash in the area. Even its prow has been exploited with a tasteless, round carousel that, coupled with a specimen garden of man-made street litter, assails and harasses the pedestrian. The full length and half the height of this building are completely obliterated by painted signs. Even the windows have not escaped. And the coup de grace is administered by four immense billboards on the roof.

The view south down 5th Street from Market has literally been thrown away. The historic old Mint and the interesting Chronicle building should be brought into focus. Would trees at the Mint, with the Chronicle tower rising above their tops, indicate something special here?

Penneys is a good example of the tasteful remodelling of the ground floor of a fine, old building with careful signing, street trees, and one of the few flower stands on the south

A mid-block landscaped plaza terminated by a high-rise building on Stevenson Street would treble the amount of valuable commercial frontage and probably would far more than pay for itself. The building could be arcaded over the street, which would be left open for service traffic.

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side of Market. Contrast this with the ugly new facade of Woolworths diagonally across the street that murders the lower stories of the once elegant Flood Building. This is only one of many handsome, classic buildings that have been remodelled insensitively, causing Market Street to lose much of its distinctive, lordly character. When stores are given new fronts or entire buildings new skins, care should be taken to ensure that the new has a sympathetic relationship with the old.

On any of the long blocks in the retail sector, pedestrian arcades through the ground floor of buildings or between them would provide useful connections with parking facilities on Mission or on the streets north of Market. Not more than 25 feet of frontage would be lost, and much more would be gained along the arcades which would be appropriate locations for small shops, cigar stands, news stands, shoeshine stands, and similar establishments.

And now we arrive at the amusement sector. Even the mood and make-up of the crowds here is different. People leisurely meandering, stopping, looking, sunning; many servicemen off duty. However corny and jazzy the street facade, the area has color and movement which should be emphasized. This sector should be designed to accommodate it to the mood of the people. Let's organize it so it really has the daytime gaiety and the nighttime fantasy an amusement district should have. The refreshment stands and other small establishments that abound here could be clustered and recessed in arcades to create intimate pockets out of the current of the street. The self-defeating contest of signs that claw their way out to the curb line should be replaced with flat signs that need be no less gay and lively but could be seen. Within the arcades and elsewhere, there should be benches (without advertising messages). One should be able to sit on something besides trashcans, or lean on mailboxes. Colorful flowerbeds would be very much in key with the character of the area.

On any of the long blocks in the retail sector, pedestrian arcades through the ground floor of buildings would provide useful connections with parking facilities on Mission or on the streets north of Market. Not more than 25 feet of frontage would be lost, and much more would be gained along the arcades which would be appropriate locations for small shops, restaurants, bars, cigar stands, news stands, shoeshine stands, and similar establishments.

The movie theaters, it seems, should make a concerted effort to spruce up and to restore some of their tarnished splendor. Certainly one could do better than the remodelled United Artists with its repaintable billboard facade and wind streamers. The theaters are too far apart with little happening between them. Perhaps the festive atmosphere could be sustained by installing specially designed, lower light standards interspersed with the existing ones, or arches of sparkling lights across the sidewalks. Design of electric signs could be coordinated with the illumination.

Planting street trees along McAllister Street would establish a link with the Civic Center. At 7th Street, it would be a happy thing to have a planted median with a strong visual accent, such as a fountain or sculpture, in the middle of Market Street.

From here west, Market is in need of major rehabilitation. The answer may be the much discussed, but never implemented, effort to link the Civic Center with Market Street. To do this effectively, sweeping views into the Civic Center must be created, and, conversely, the vistas from the Center to Market Street must not terminate in junk. Opposite the Market-Fulton intersection, why not a plaza on the south side of the street surrounded by important commercial buildings or government offices? If the Civic Center Plan is carried out, the two blocks between Jones and Hyde will be opened up, and when the Hyde-Larkin block is reconstructed (as proposed in the plan), views into the Civic Center should be created. Thus our Civic Center, one of the most beautiful in America, could give tremendous support to Market Street.

The Towne House certainly needs strong tree planting in its parking lot. The gigantic painted sign on the east end of the adjacent building cheapens the open space created by setting back the Towne House from the street. Fortunately the Market Street facade of the Whitcomb Hotel has not been painted a virulent green like the other elevations. A good looking porte cochere, special paving, and organization of the leased space east of the entrance so that the columns would reappear, together with street trees and special lighting, would help the front of the building immeasurably. Across the street, the Pioneer Monument needs space of its own in a plaza, to be appreciated.

The recently remodelled building on the southwest corner of Market and 10th seems an example of what not to do. If allowed to proliferate, the aluminum strip and glazed panel

would make Market Street tawdry, transient and typed, just like every Main street in America. Although they may not be architectural masterpieces, all buildings of the past by contrast look real solid, and permanent, even after their undergroundings have been attacked.

Market and Van Ness Avenue should be a visually important intersection. The new Bank of America Data Processing Center could be the keystone. The ugly low buildings on the northeast and southwest corners, surmounted by billboards, are the dirtiest indignities and should be replaced. Street trees on Van Ness would lead one's eye to the Civic Center.

Reflections and Observations

As we have walked up Market Street, we have mused on what we saw and freely improvised on how it should be changed. These are essentially random impressions, spontaneous ideas, that have yet to be critically studied. However, it is clear that two categories of change are needed. One is a program of private rehabilitation such as successfully transformed Jackson Square and Maiden Lane in relatively few years. The other category requires the action of public agencies. The two programs should be closely coordinated both in design and timing so as to be mutually sustaining.

The public projects - landscaped medians and plazas, fountains and pools, pedestrian concourses in the subway - are essentially linear and will tend to be monumental and rather formal. But the five Market Streets should have five distinctive characters, and urban landscape design appropriate for one will not do in the others. Within each of the sectors, private improvements can be more consciously chaotic, multi-faceted, prismatic, but to achieve the desired effect they must be carefully designed and coordinated.

When a building is remodelled, the basic design and structure of the original should be retained. Its relationship to adjacent buildings should be considered. Applying terra cotta and aluminum as cosmetics simply results in a cheap looking, multi-story "store front". New buildings should heed the scale and character of their settings and respect their older neighbors. In every case signs should be an integral part of the design of the structure, not excrescences. In each sector the property owners could form their own sign control districts, establishing distinctively appropriate design criteria.

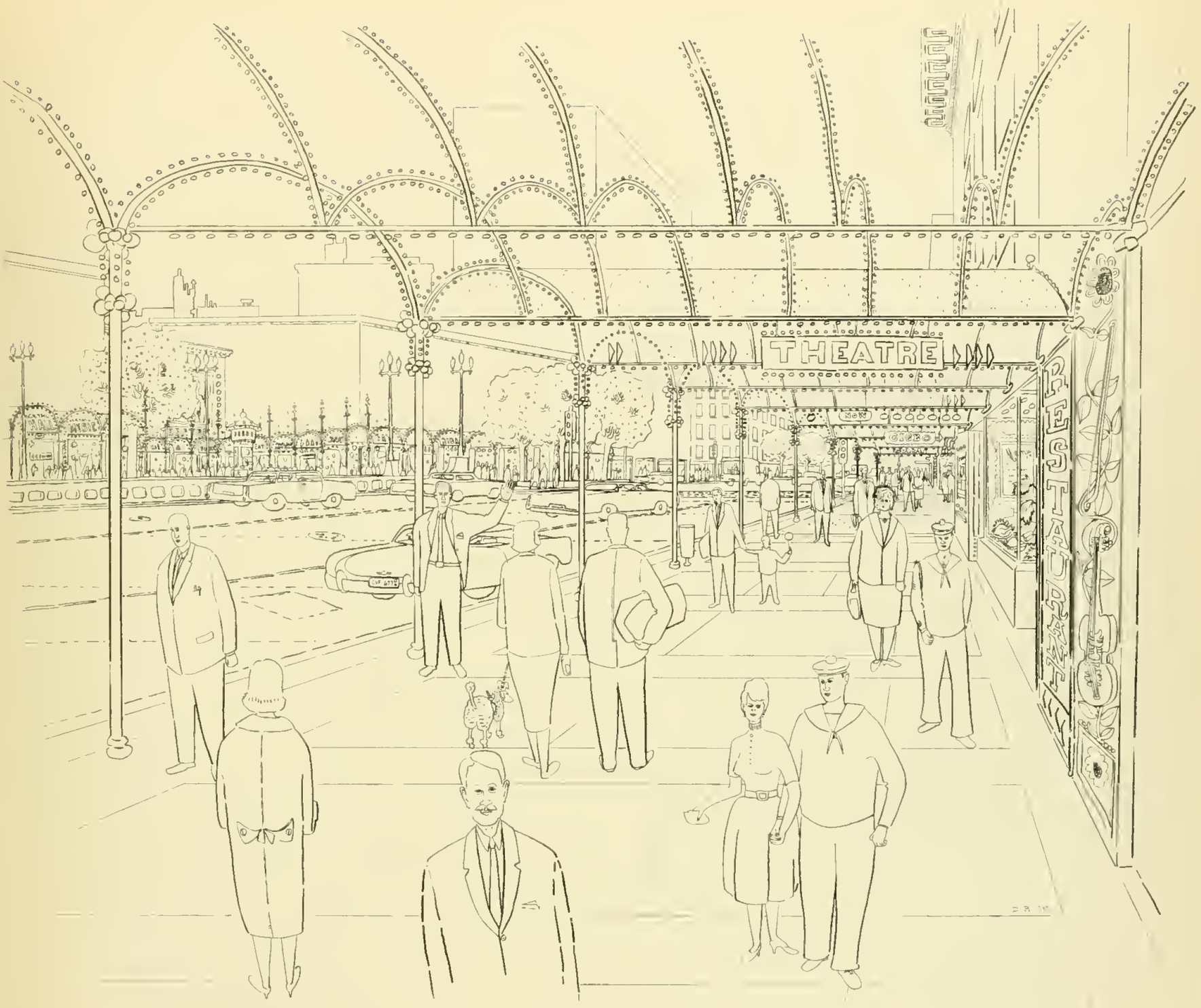
Considerable landscaping is needed on Market Street, both on private properties and in the street. Wherever possible, the triangular islands on the north side should be joined with their parent blocks and landscaped, even if traffic patterns must be changed. Tree planting can be an important link, integrating Market Street with surrounding areas. Street furniture - news stands, flower stands, planters, electroliers, mailboxes, trashcans, directional signs - all need to be designed to harmonize with each other and with the sector in which they are located. The City should rationalize the confusing arrays of official signs that sprout from almost every pole, so that they can be readily seen and understood.

Skillful illumination of buildings and adjacent sidewalks can contribute greatly to the nightscape. The handsome electroliers, dating from the 1915 Fair, have just been repainted and more powerful lamps have been installed. The bluish-green glow is hardly conducive to warmth and gaiety, but the new lamps are the best now available without sacrificing light. When better colors come on the market, the lamps should be replaced. The electroliers should do as much for Market Street as the Grant Avenue fixtures contribute to Chinatown.

A cheerful visual note would be added if the local shoppers shuttle were an attractively designed, self-powered electric train instead of just another motor coach. Many people go out of their way to ride the cable car; a colorful shuttle might have the same effect.

On our walk up Market Street, we have suggested three basically different kinds of improvements. One is the relatively inexpensive facelifting and landscaping of private properties, which can be accomplished in a few years. Another is the various public projects, ranging all the way from sign reform to rapid transit. The third category is large scale private improvements, such as major remodelling and new high-rise buildings fronting on plazas, that may not be realized until the late 1960's.

The festive atmosphere of the amusement sector could be sustained by installing specially designed, lower light standards interspersed with the existing ones, or arches of sparkling lights across the sidewalks. Design of electric signs could be coordinated with the illumination. This part of Market Street might be turned into a "show street".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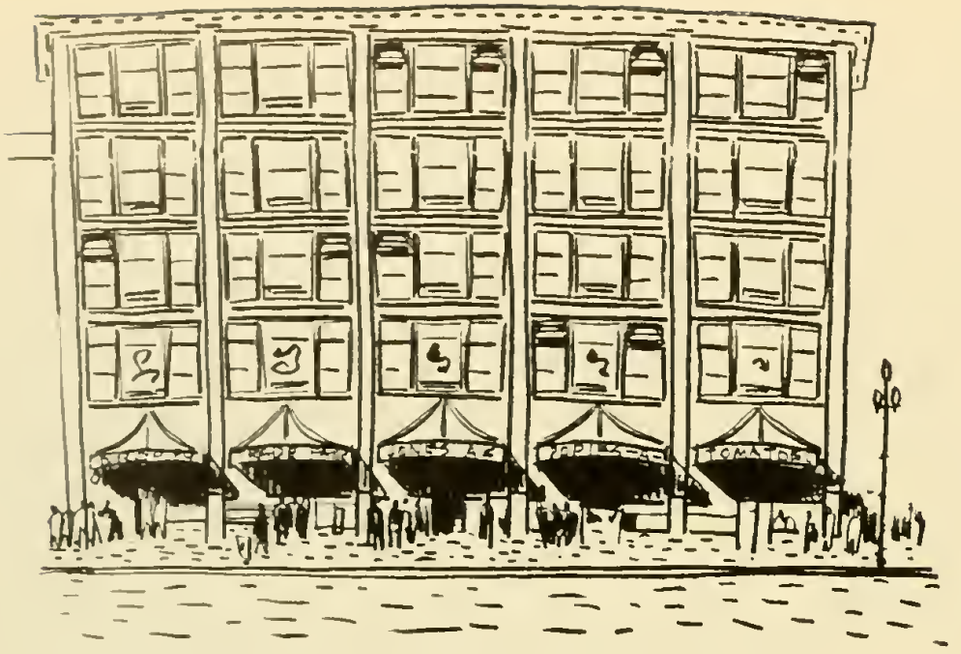
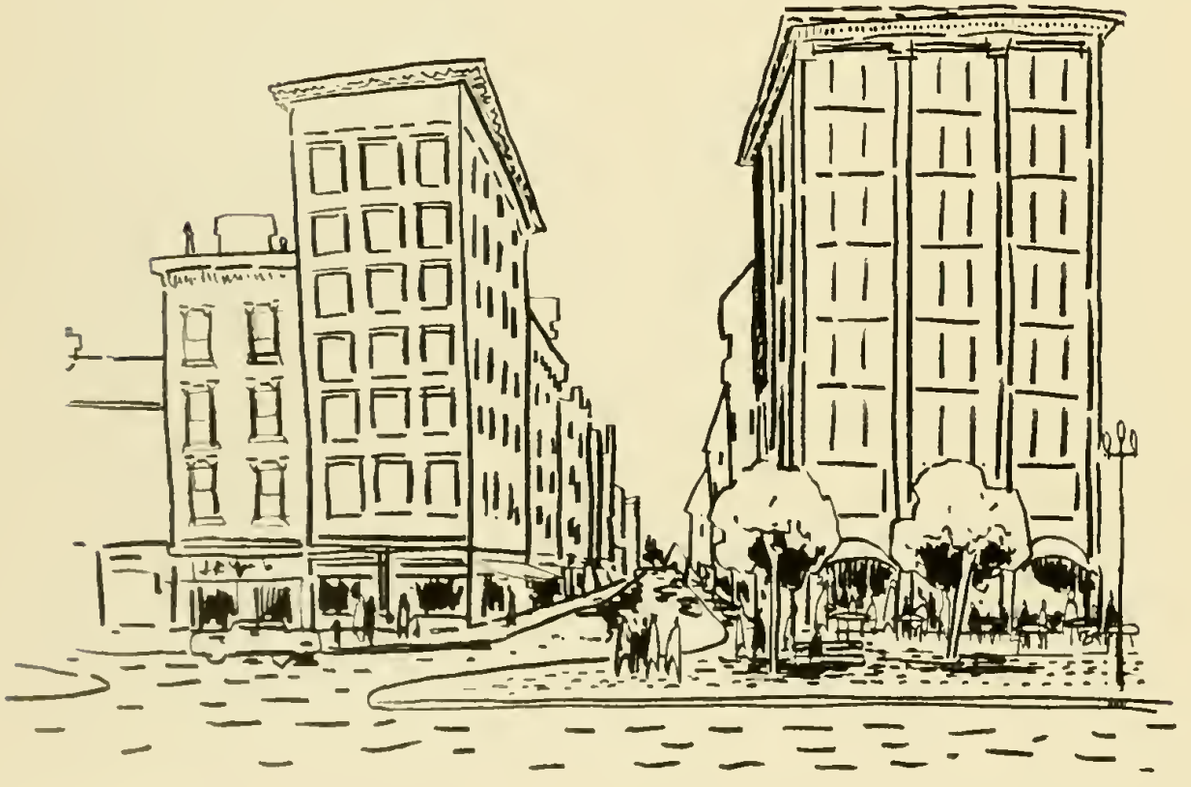


Uniform Awnings



Pedestrian Island Connected with Block

Blueprint for Action

It is clear that Market Street urgently needs improvement; and it is equally clear that there is a strong base from which to start. Recent developments, projects now underway, and others in the planning stage give strong hope for the future. But what is needed is a coordinated development program for the entire street. If it is to have the desired effect, the improvement plan should be essentially short range in scale. If it is not substantially carried out within five years or so, Market Street will only have retrogressed past the point of no return, as have the main streets of many U.S. cities. It would make sense if the improvements were completed at about the same time as the rapid transit subway opened (1967). All the sections of the street should be attacked at once. None can thrive as long as Market Street is only a good address. Past experience has demonstrated that piecemeal or spot improvements will not accomplish the needed results.

Both private and public projects should be included in the plan. Improvements for all private properties in need of change should be designed to [illegible]

costs accurately. Other projects not on private property, such as lighting, street furniture, paving, and landscaping, that may have to be financed privately or by assessment districts, also should have price tags put on them. Every property owner and tenant should have sufficient information on which to base a sound judgment as to whether investment in the proposed improvements will be financially worthwhile. Public projects included in the plan should be closely geared to the private development program. Here again cost estimates will be essential so that capital expenditures can be budgeted year by year in step with private improvements. The City will receive two dollars in federal aid for every dollar spent on projects that serve redevelopment areas, such as the Golden Gateway and South of Market projects.

Development Program

To accomplish these objectives, a major private-public effort will be essential. There must be a financially feasible improvement plan and a strong active organization to carry it out.

Improvement Plan

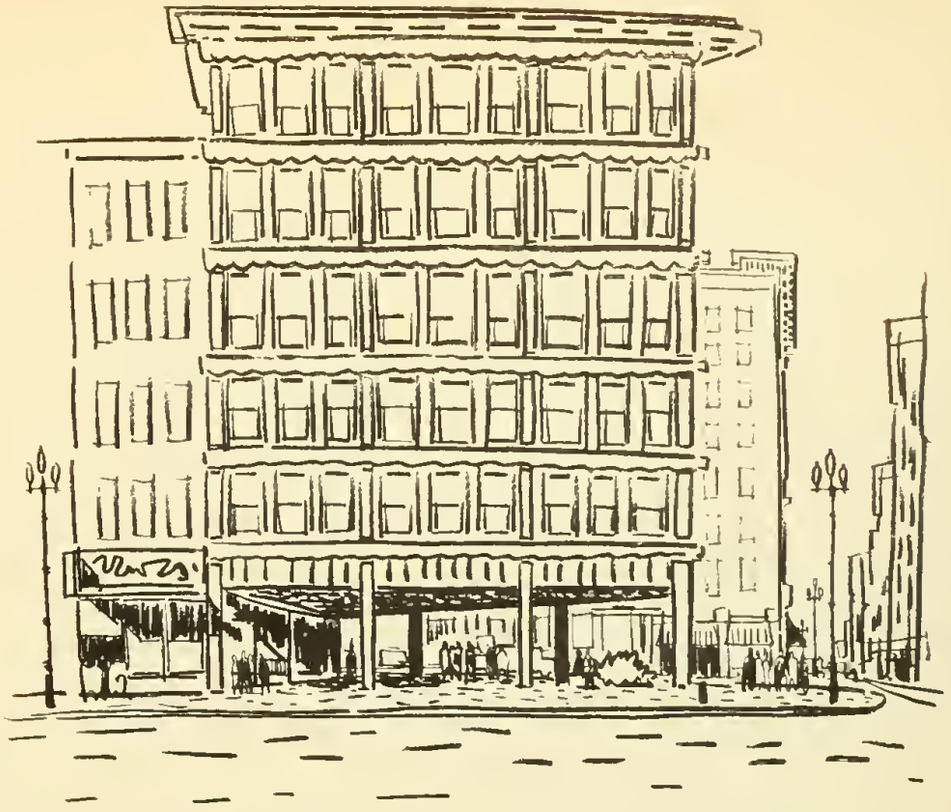
Preparation of a Market Street improvement plan will involve five steps.

1. Market Studies. Real estate consultants must analyze present trends in property values, costs of recent improvements, assessments, taxes, rents, lease terms, and other pertinent economic factors, comparing conditions on Market Street with those elsewhere in downtown San Francisco and in comparable locations in other cities. A careful study should be made to determine the present and prospective future market for various types of stores, service establishments, office buildings, financial institutions, hotels, restaurants, theaters and other amusements, and data processing centers and other specialized activities. This study should deal primarily with short-range trends so that Market Street property owners can know what scale of development they realistically can anticipate. It will be necessary to investigate market prospects in the entire central business district and then to determine Market Street's share of the total, making various assumptions about the scale and timing of the development program and about rapid transit subway construction.

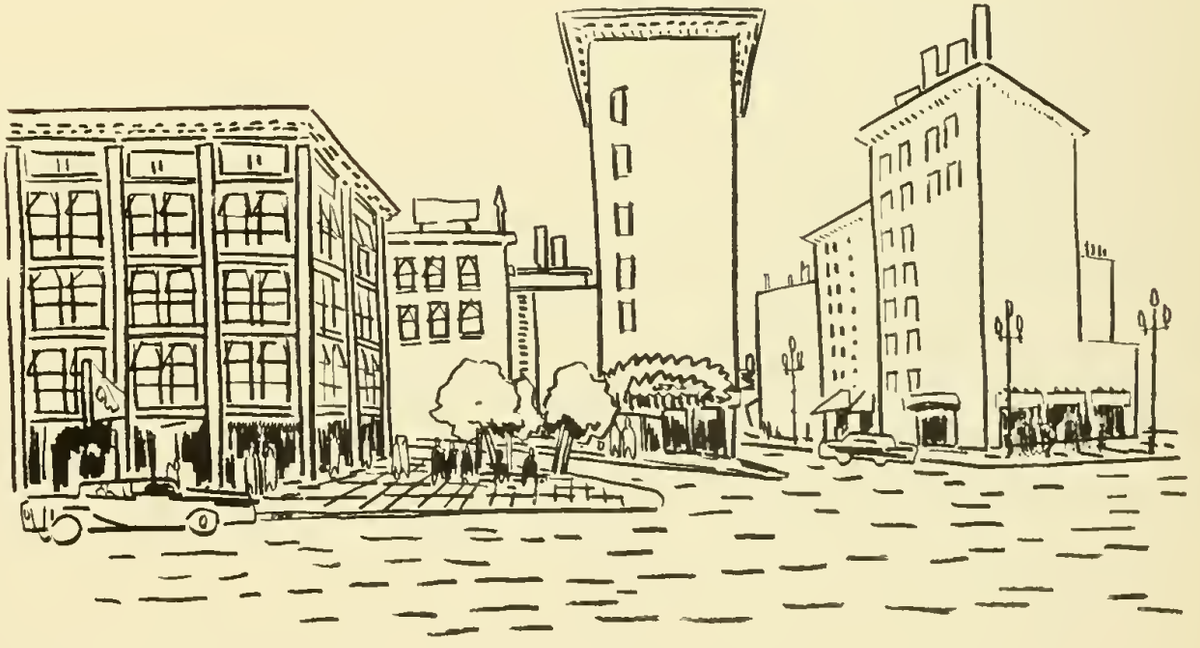
2. Urban Development Studies. Market Street planners should make a detailed inventory and analysis of present development and improvement projects that already have been announced. The effects of the Golden Gateway Redevelopment Project and the Ferry Building Park, the South of Market Redevelopment Project (with and without its boundaries changed), rapid transit plans, the Municipal Railway's plans for surface transit, the Parking Authority's plans, the Civic Center plan, and proposals of the Downtown Plan should be analyzed. Whether the present functional division of Market Street into five sectors is advantageous, and how this might be changed should be explored. An investigation should be made of the adequacy of present parking facilities serving Market Street and the extent of future needs, based on the same alternate assumptions as the market studies. Present and projected future traffic volumes and patterns similarly should be studied. All of these investigations must be made looking at Market Street in the context of the entire central business district. The planners should submit recommendations on the future uses and character of each of the sectors of Market Street and their immediate tributary areas, and recommendations on parking, traffic circulation, and transit.

3. Design Studies. Urban designers, architects, and landscape architects should prepare a detailed analysis of the present appearance of Market Street, block by block and lot by lot, and decide what should be conserved, what should be changed, and what the changes should be. The architects then should prepare preliminary plans and cost estimates for the recommended treatment of each property including refurbishing, remodelling, new construction, and new signs. To give each sector of Market Street a distinctive character, it might be advisable to assign each to a different architect. In this case, to avoid jarring results, one firm should be responsible for coordinating all of the designs. The landscape architects should prepare preliminary plans and cost estimates for the treatment of public and private plazas, streets, subway concourses, and other open spaces, including such items as planting, pavements, fountains, sculpture and other embellishments, street furniture, and illumination. Other architects and landscape architects may be retained by private property owners, lessees, the City, and the Rapid Transit District to prepare the detailed plans and working drawings of the projects as they are constructed. This will be satisfactory, in fact desirable to avoid a too-uniform look, provided that the concepts of the original, coordinated designs are followed. Needless to say, the preliminary plans will be essential for estimating costs.

4. Financial Feasibility. The next step will be a financial



Flatiron Building with Ground Floor Opened



Flatiron Building with Corner Removed

Mid-block Pedestrian Arcade

Buildings Set-back to Create Mall

feasibility study made by the real estate consultants comparing the estimated costs of the proposed improvements with the projected benefits they will yield. Their effects on sales volumes, property values, and over their amortization periods must be reckoned. The fact that a comprehensive program will bring greater returns than individual investments in improvements should be taken into account. Provided that the results of this analysis are favorable, various methods of financing should be evaluated. Possibilities include individual private investments, group projects financed by voluntary contributions, by an assessment district, or by a development corporation, City-sponsored improvements, and projects utilizing the federally-aided urban renewal process.

5. Improvement Program. As the final step, the property owners, the lessees, the City, the Rapid Transit District and the other agencies involved should agree on a definite time schedule for construction of each project and the method for financing it. Guided by such a program, property owners and merchants could proceed with their own confidence in Market Street improvements, knowing that they contribute to the larger dividends that a coordinated effort will produce.

The cost of preparing such an improvement plan will be the sum of the real estate consultants', city planners', architects', landscape architects', and graphics designers' fees, plus presentation, public relations and administrative costs. The planning costs could be shared on the basis of one of a number of formulas that have proved equitable and workable elsewhere. Some that deserve consideration include front foot or square foot assessed values, value or floor area of improvements, retail sales volumes in stores and rents derived from office space, and various combinations of these factors. The formula selected might be adjusted to give weight to the amount of work involved in planning particular sectors, blocks, or properties. Because of its great financial stake in the future of Market Street, the City should contribute to the cost of the plan as well as paying for its share of the improvements.

Permanent Organization

To sponsor preparation of the improvement plan and to be responsible for its being carried out, a permanent organization of Market Street property owners and businessmen should be formed. The Market Street Development Project Steering Committee could be the nucleus. The organization should have a budget sufficient to employ an executive director and necessary staff, to contract with consultants and incur other expenses incidental to preparing the plan, and, most important, to ensure that the program is translated into action. Dues to the association could be based on the same formula as sharing the cost of the plan, or a variation of it.

Experience in cities with successful development programs demonstrates that continuous coordination, surveillance, prodding, and promotion will be necessary. A single individual, with the ability to inspire confidence in the property owners, the businessmen and the City, must work full time on the job and he must have enthusiastic support. He will be responsible for raising funds to finance preparation of the plan, for checking on progress on the plan, for securing agreement on its proposals, and for ensuring that the programs are carried out on schedule and in accord with the plan. Achieving these purposes will require continuous contact with private individuals and groups involved in the development of Market Street and with the City, the Rapid Transit District, and other public agencies.

During the period when the program is being carried out and after it is completed, the association also could engage in various activities to promote business. It should take all steps necessary to stimulate new private and public investment in Market Street. And the association must be continuously on the alert to assure that properties are adequately maintained, that sub-lease and other applicable ordinances are enforced, that new business establishments are appropriate, and that new improvements conform with the plan.

Revitalization of Market Street will be a big order, but not too big for San Francisco. This is the city that built Golden Gate Park, the magnificent Civic Center, the Bay Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, and the Panama Pacific and Golden Gate International Expositions. Carrying out the Market Street development program will be less difficult, less complicated, and probably considerably less expensive than any of the city's three redevelopment projects now in the planning or construction stage. But it is equally important. [illegible] Most of what exists on Market Street deserves to be conserved or at least [illegible]. Investments in Market Street improvements will pay dividends.

The Golden Gateway and South of Market Redevelopment Projects, the Stock Building Park, the Civic Center expansion program, and particularly the rapid transit subway eventually will all converge on Market Street. Enlightened self-interest dictates that now is the time for Market Street to act.

Data Sources

San Francisco Assessor's Office

San Francisco Department of City Planning

San Francisco Municipal Railway

San Francisco Police Department

San Francisco Redevelopment Agency

San Francisco Traffic Engineering Division

San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

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